



Dear Representative Kline,

As the largest Minnesota family owned and operated licensed provider of high-quality child care, I want to thank you for sponsoring S. 1086 to reauthorize the Child Care and Development Block Grant (CCDBG). This bill, which has not been reauthorized since 1996, gives children from low-income families access to high-quality child care programs that support their school-readiness and healthy development.

High-quality care and learning programs provide opportunities for healthy growth and development that produce positive educational achievement and high economic returns on investment through adulthood. Additionally, CCDBG serves as an essential support to working families who need to ensure their children are cared for and learning in a safe and high-quality setting during parents' hours of employment, which often exceed the regular school day and extend into the evening.

This bill will provide important reforms that will directly addresses quality improvement, affordability, continuity of care, and cost stabilization measures that will benefit families and support providers, including:

- Stronger health and safety standards for all child care programs that receive federal funding, including required annual inspections of all licensed providers, and annual fire, health, and safety inspections of license-exempt, non-family providers;
- Technical assistance given to providers on effective business practices;
- De-linking provider reimbursement from absence policies that destabilize the cost of care for both families and providers;
- Extended subsidy eligibility re-determination periods (12 months);
- A new emphasis on technical assistance to providers around effective business practices, and
- Increased investment in program quality, with additional activities that include wage incentives, tiered reimbursement, Quality Rating and Improvement Systems, accreditation, and focus on school-readiness.

Additionally, this bill will help ensure that low-income families can access high-quality care by benefiting from a mixed delivery model, and choosing high-quality options within their own community.

We thank you for your leadership in this bipartisan effort to reauthorize the CCDBG Act, which provides a critical pathway to the middle class for serving as a highly productive workforce of today and becoming the prepared and productive workforce of tomorrow.

Sincerely,

Chad Dunkley
Chief Executive Officer
New Horizon Academy